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# Hoe Valley School Pest Control Policy

Person Responsible: Premises Manager  
Date Adopted: Summer 2021  
Date of last review: Summer 2021  
Date of next review: Summer 2023

## **Aim**

The goal of successful pest control in schools is to protect pupils and staff from noxious pests

## **Context**

Particular area of schools, for example, kitchens, food stores, food tech classrooms and dining halls can provide ideal conditions for certain pests. Pests carry organisms that can be transmitted to humans, such as Salmonella bacteria, Leptospira (Jaundice), Gastroenteritis and Typhus etc. Children and infants and some vulnerable adults are more susceptible than the general public to the harmful effects from pests. Children and infants are more susceptible because of their immature immune systems. Some vulnerable adults are at risk because their immune systems may have been chemically suppressed.

It is not a legal requirement in a school to have a pest control contract BUT it is a legal requirement that schools manage pest control.

## **Types of Pest**

The following is a list of common pests currently found in Great Britain:

- Ants
- Beetles
- Foxes
- Bed Bugs
- Cockroaches
- Houseflies
- Rabbits
- Wasps
- Pigeons
- Mice
- Rats
- Woodlice
- Moles
- Moths
- Fleas

## **Ants**

The commonest species of ant is the black garden ant. Limited measures can be taken by premises staff but professional pest control contractors should be brought in if large numbers of ants' nests are found.

## **Flies**

Flies carry disease and tend to be around in the warmer weather in Spring and Summer. Flies are attracted to food. FlyZaps are located in the kitchen/cooking areas of the school.

## **Bats**

Bats may only be handled by those licensed to do so. They cause no direct harm though their droppings may cause problems with smell and insect infestations. If bats are found on or near school premises, the local Environmental Health Officer should be contacted. The Bat Conservation Trust, can be contacted if help is needed to remove injured or dead bats.

### **Wasps, Bees and Hornets**

Wasp normally build their nests in sheltered spots, with easy access to outside. They can be found in areas such as wall cavities, roof spaces and under eaves. They can grow to around the size of a football as the summer progresses. Only female wasps sting, but they can do so repeatedly. Honey bees live in colonies often greater than 30,000 in roof and wall cavities and hollow trees. They swarm in early summer. They have a barbed sting and die once this is used but will sting when provoked. Professional vermin control contractors should be contacted to rid a school of wasp or hornet infestation. If there is a problem with honey bees, a local bee keeper or Environmental Health Officer should be contacted to relocate, not destroy, the nest as they are a protected species.

### **Cockroaches**

Cockroaches will feed on almost anything from food to faecal matter. They are commonly found in kitchens and heating systems. They prefer warm moist conditions, and they reproduce rapidly. They can spread bacteria and usually indicate that food preparation areas are not clean. Germs can be spread from the body of a cockroach or from their droppings. They can carry dysentery, gastro-enteritis, typhoid and food poisoning organisms. Contamination occurs when the cockroaches come into contact with foodstuffs.

### **Fleas**

Fleas are external parasites, living off the blood of mammals and birds and include cat/dog fleas, human fleas and rat fleas. Beside the problems posed by the flea itself, they can also act as a vector for disease, for example, fleas can transmit a variety of viral and bacterial diseases to humans and other animals.

### **Mice**

“House” mice are considered amongst the most troublesome and economically damaging rodents in the UK. They nest in the ground or in any protected location in nests constructed of shredded fibrous material such as paper. The female produces 5 to 10 litters per year, averaging five per litter. Mice contaminate foodstuffs with their urine, droppings and hair and amongst the diseases they may transmit to humans are:

- salmonellosis (food poisoning)
- rickettsialpox
- lymphocytic choriomeningitis

Mice also chew cables and wiring and this can cause short-circuiting and increase fire hazard.

### **Pigeons**

Pigeons can carry psittacosis which can cause respiratory illnesses and flu-like symptoms, if humans are exposed to infected birds. Local authorities are empowered to control and destroy pigeons if they pose a threat to public health. Other measures can be taken to prevent pigeons nesting such as wires on windowsills and netting across open pathways and courtyards.

### **Rats**

Common rats live in any situation that provides food, water and shelter. The common rat is the most widespread of its species and is widely found in urban and rural areas. Their favourite foods are cereal products, although they will eat almost anything that humans eat. Rats can transmit several diseases to humans including Weil’s disease which is a bacterial infection that attacks the kidneys and liver and can be deadly. Hoe Valley School controls rats through a pest control company using the best practice.

## **Squirrels**

The main threat from squirrels is that they enter roof spaces and chew woodwork, strip insulation from wiring and water pipes and drown in open water tanks causing contamination. Preventative measures should also be taken such as blocking gaps and entry holes with wire mesh and ensuring frequent inspection of roof spaces.

## **Foxes**

Foxes are increasingly seen in urban and suburban areas as well as rural areas. The fox is primarily carnivorous, and they are highly effective scavengers finding waste in towns and cities plentiful. The law prevents the use of poisons or illegal traps or snares to control foxes and it is illegal to shoot them in urban areas. Foxes can carry toxocariasis, a parasitic roundworm which can be passed to humans. Infection is extremely rare and only affects around two people per million in the UK each year. Fox faeces may contain bacteria which can cause sickness in humans, so faeces should not be directly handled. Fox dens are established in January/February for cubs born in March. If a fox den is discovered in school grounds, the Environmental Health Officer should be contacted.

## **Premises**

Premises often offer an ideal breeding ground for pests. Roof spaces and corners provide shelter from the elements. Old boiler rooms, over several degrees warmer than the rest of the building, stuffed with debris and insulating materials are also ideal places for pests to build their nests. Holes in external walls give easy access to sources of food and water and need a mesh barrier in place. Scheduled systematic cleaning of areas contaminated with food is an essential measure to reduce the risk of infestation.

## **Control Measures**

- We aim to stop pests getting into our kitchen and food storage areas with well-fitted doors, covered drains, fly screens and an insecticutor
- We look out for the evidence of the presence of pests including droppings, “chew-marks” on carpets and wiring, insect droppings and nests in all parts of our school buildings and grounds
- The Site Manager will take on the role of pest control monitoring and liaise with the local authority environmental health officer if necessary
- Adequate cleaning measures for the kitchen are in place. The kitchen staff clean daily. The kitchen staff have dedicated cleaning days during the school year and the school also pays for a deep clean (high level) of the kitchen once a year
- The school is cleaned daily and a deep clean of the school is undertaken 3 times a year
- Boiler rooms are kept free of rubbish and other items
- Roofs are checked regularly for any damage caused by pests or evidence of pests nesting
- All grass areas of the school are maintained by our Premises team. Kept cut short so as to not to harbour any pests and to destroy any habitat that may attract the possibility of foxes/moles/rabbits etc making their dens
- Faeces when found will be cleared immediately
- Waste management is dealt with well. Classroom and office bins are emptied daily. Large external bins are kept away from school buildings (at the front of the school). Kitchen waste is not left in the kitchen and is also moved daily away from the kitchen to the front of the school
- Preventative traps are in place and can be found in the woodland area (where they live) and various strategic places around the school. The traps are checked regularly. Staff are on duty at all times while children are on breaks to minimise risk of students touching the traps.

### **Pest Control Companies**

Any reputable pest control firm will be able to eradicate pests/vermin and ensure that premises are clean and safe for reoccupation. The contractors will also ensure that any pesticides or other toxins used to eradicate infestation are safely administered without risk to users of the building.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

The Site Manager is the named member of staff responsible for pest control. He is responsible for the following:

- Routinely checking the school buildings for any evidence of pests
- Contacting a pest control company when necessary
- Contacting the Environmental Health Officer at the local authority if necessary.

If staff suspect the presence of pests they should inform the Site Manager immediately

### **If an infestation is discovered:**

- The affected areas should be closed pending the arrival of the local authority environmental health team member
- No food or drink should be prepared nor should pupils and staff re-occupy the space until the pests have been eliminated, disposed of and the area thoroughly cleaned
- Measurers will be used to stop or restrict growth.